

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Initially, applicants note the Office Action of May 20, 2004, has not made it clear whether the drawings filed on November 2, 2000 are accepted. Box 10 of the Office Action Summary Form with the Office Action of May 10, 2004, is checked but it is not indicated whether the drawings are accepted or objected. Applicants believe that the drawings are proper but ask for confirmation that the drawings have been accepted.

Claims 20-29 are pending in this application. Claims 20-23 and 25-28 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as anticipated by U.S. patent 5,371,553 to Kawamura et al. (herein “Kawamura”). Claims 24 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as unpatentable over Kawamura in view of U.S. patent 5,745,837 to Fuhrmann.

Addressing now the rejection of claims 20-23 and 25-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Kawamura, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Applicants initially note the claims are amended by the present response to make certain clarifications.

With respect to independent claims 20, 22, 25, and 27, those claims are amended by the present response to be more clearly directed to a communication method that can provide a service to a user by forwarding, to a network, information indicating a method of controlling apparatuses connected to the network and information indicating information that each apparatus can give to the other apparatuses on the network, so that each apparatus can collect information of the other apparatuses as necessary.

More particularly, as now clarified in independent claim 20, and as similarly recited in amended independent claims 22, 25, and 27, “each of the information apparatuses inform[s] other of the information apparatuses of a method by which the apparatus itself is controlled”. That is, in the above-noted claims a communication method operates such that

each apparatus connected to the network informs the other apparatuses on the network of the method by which the apparatus itself is controlled. The above-noted features clarified in the noted claims are fully supported by the original specification, for example at page 104, line 18 et seq., and see particularly page 111, lines 4-14 and page 115, lines 6-10. Further, the features clarified in the claims are believed to clearly distinguish over the applied art.

Kawamura discloses a method of controlling an apparatus connected to a network by icons. In Kawamura the apparatus has three windows, as shown in Figure 1 therein, including a first control window 3 to display icons 4-7 indicating receiving channels and icons 8-10 indicating audio-visual units, i.e. indicating apparatuses connected to the network (for example an AV network such as IEEE1394).¹ Kawamura further discloses a second control window 10 that displays control keys 13a to 13j.² In Kawamura the control keys can be manually clicked on by a click button/track ball 54 or by a remote controlling and pointing device.³

Kawamura further discloses informing a monitor apparatus 21 of information indicating information that each device can give to the other devices.⁴ More specifically, Kawamura discloses that a menu of programs supplied from the audio-visual units can be displayed on the monitor unit.⁵

However, applicants submit that such teachings in Kawamura differ from the noted claims as currently written.

More particularly, in the noted claims each of the information apparatuses informs other of the information apparatuses of a method by which the apparatus itself is controlled. Such an operation contrasts to Kawamura in which a display unit is merely provided to display programs supplied from the various audio-visual units on a network. Kawamura does

¹ Kawamura at column 9, line 65 to column 10, line 24.

² Kawamura at column 10, lines 52-56.

³ Kawamura at column 10, lines 57-64.

⁴ Kawamura at column 5, line 36 et seq.

⁵ Kawamura at column 5, lines 42-44.

not disclose or suggest providing information to each of the plurality of information apparatuses on the network of the method by which each of the other apparatuses is controlled.

In such ways, each of amended independent claims 20, 22, 25, and 27, and the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to clearly distinguish over the teachings in Kawamura.

With respect to the rejection of claims 24 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as unpatentable over Kawamura in view of Fuhrmann, that rejection is also traversed by the present response.

Independent claim 24 is amended by the present response to clarify features similarly as noted above as an independent claim 20, and independent claim 29 recites similar features. As noted above Kawamura fails to teach or suggest the claimed features. Moreover, applicants respectfully submit that Fuhrmann cannot overcome the deficiencies in Kawamura.

Fuhrmann merely discloses a method of using an ATM on a CATV network.

Claims 24 and 29 are also directed to a method and system in which each apparatus connected to the network informs the other apparatuses of a method by which the apparatus itself is controlled. Independent claims 24 and 29 further indicate that the information data is transmitted using a predetermined fixed length message. Fuhrmann does not disclose or suggest the above-noted features, and thus Fuhrmann cannot overcome the deficiencies of Kawamura noted above. Further, neither Kawamura nor Fuhrmann disclose transmitting the information data using a predetermined fixed length message.

In such ways, independent claims 24 and 29, and the claims dependent therefrom, also distinguish over the combination of teachings of Kawamura in view of Fuhrmann.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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